Annual Monitoring Review Group 2012

17 September 2012 3pm River Room 2

Meeting Report

Present: David Coates (Deputy Principal for Learning and Teaching, Convenor), Lesley McLellan (Director of Quality Assurance), Jonathan Baldwin (CASE), William Whitfield (CLS), Alison Reeves (CASS), Heather Marr (CMDN), Paula Elliott (Principal’s Office), Rachael Doherty (Deputy President, DUSA), Arlene Stewart (CLS)

Apologies; Carey Normand (CASS), David Bearn (CMDN)

Introduction

As part of the process of annual monitoring of taught provision, it had been proposed that each School provide a commentary on their Learning and Teaching Development Plans (LTDPs) that would be reviewed by a group comprising the Deputy Principal for Learning and Teaching, the College Heads of Learning and Teaching (and College Heads of Quality Assurance where appropriate), the Deputy President of DUSA and the Director of Quality Assurance. Deans were asked to provide a short report that addressed the following points:

1. What is the status of your annual monitoring of programmes? i.e. Have all programmes and modules been monitored for AY 2010/11, and how was the programme monitoring process reviewed at School level? Give an indication of the planned timetable for module and programme monitoring for AY 2011/12.

2. What were the key outcomes from the monitoring of taught provision for AY 2010/11, and what changes to programmes and modules have been made as a result of outcomes from programme monitoring?

3. What is your action plan resulting from annual monitoring?

4. Is there anything that needs to be drawn to the attention of the University or College to enable your action plan (within available resources)?

5. Are there any developments that you would like to highlight (e.g. areas of good practice or significant achievement)?

The deadline for receipt of reports was Friday 24 August 2012. Seven reports were received prior to the meeting of 17 Sept 2012, and seven were outstanding (see Appendix 1).

This summary report, with action points, will be brought to the attention of the University Learning & Teaching Quality Forum and the Learning & Teaching Committee (reporting to Senate).

The format of the meeting of the review panel was agreed as follows: College Heads of Learning and Teaching or Quality Assurance (or their representatives) would present their views on the reports received from the relevant Schools, the Director of Quality Assurance would comment on the process and opportunities for development, and the DUSA Deputy President would give the student perspective on the reports.

CASS: Alison Reeves, College Head of Quality Assurance

Reports had been received from the Schools of Business, Education, Social Work and Community Education, Humanities, Psychology and the Environment. It was noted that there was considerable variation in reporting style, and that it was challenging to extract meaningful information on the effectiveness of annual monitoring processes from most of the reports. It was agreed that the report from the School of Psychology was an excellent ‘model report’ and that it would be useful to share this report with other Schools to clarify expectations and help provide consistency in reporting style.

David Coates agreed to follow-up with the School of Psychology to ask whether the report could be
shared with the other Schools as an example of good practice. The variation in use of workload models across the College was highlighted as an area for development.

CMDN: Heather Marr, College Head of Quality Enhancement

Reports had been received by the School of Nursing and Midwifery and the School of Dentistry. As noted for CASS, there were instances where variations in the detail provided in the commentaries presented challenges to the review group in assessing the effectiveness of annual monitoring in promoting enhancement.

The report from the School of Nursing and Midwifery highlighted the development of new programmes and the marketing of post qualifying programmes. The impact of the voluntary severance scheme on staffing was noted. The School of Nursing and Midwifery and the School of Dentistry are currently taking a collaborative approach to administrative support for both Schools.

In the updated development plan and commentary for the School of Dentistry, the work being undertaken to improve quality of the programme was described, particularly with regard to development of assessment methods. The staff resource (following recent retirements of academic staff) was noted as an issue that the School is working to address. A major action being undertaken by the School, in response to annual monitoring reports and revision of learning outcomes for undergraduate dental education by the General Dental Council, is a comprehensive review of the curriculum. This will align with and inform the periodic programme review scheduled for early spring 2013. The development of inter-professional learning was also highlighted as a priority for the School.

CLS: William Whitfield, College Head of Quality Assurance

The report from the Life Sciences Learning and Teaching School (LSLTS) was considered. It was noted that LSLTS is in the process of launching its new curriculum and that much of the focus of activities is focused on developing the way forward for the new curriculum. There are plans in place to ensure robust College oversight of annual monitoring of SHE Levels 1 – 4 teaching during the transition period, and beyond. Taught postgraduate activities are being monitored by the College Taught Postgraduate Committee.

The use of the Evasys assessment tool being piloted in Life Sciences was described for the way they currently collect and handle student feedback. This was noted as being a potentially valuable system that could be used to develop a more consistent approach to student feedback across the institution.

CASE: Jonathan Baldwin, College Head of Learning and Teaching

No reports from Schools had been received to date. It was noted that the report from the School of Computing would be available once it had been considered by School and College Boards.

Lesley McLellan: University Director of Quality Assurance

In light of recent developments in operational planning processes at School, College and institutional levels (where School Learning and Teaching Plans are now embedded in the School Operational Plans), there was discussion on whether our current arrangements for institutional oversight of annual monitoring of academic quality remain fit for purpose. It was agreed that the reflective, quality-focused purpose of annual monitoring at School and College level was not being consistently addressed, and that measures needed to be put in place to reinforce the importance of our quality culture at Dundee. It was acknowledged that the task of ensuring that quality enhancement and the student experience are robustly considered and firmly embedded in institutional operational planning processes is made more difficult when there is duplication and overlap in reporting requirements – this issue will need to be addressed as a priority. Lesley McLellan and David Coates agreed to take
this forward through development of our current quality assurance processes to ensure alignment of the quality agenda with institutional strategies and operational planning.

Rachael Doherty: Deputy President, Dundee University Students’ Association

The importance and effectiveness of the Student Representatives’ Council (SRC) was noted. Feedback on issues regarding the quality of teaching accommodation (e.g. cleanliness) was discussed. It was agreed that the DUSA Deputy President would ensure that any issues arising from SRC meetings would be fed back to David Coates.

Conclusions from the Annual Review Meeting

It was agreed there is a requirement to refine our current processes for institutional oversight of annual monitoring in the future to ensure an appropriate focus on quality enhancement. Schools are interpreting reporting on Learning and Teaching Development Plans and Programme Monitoring in different ways, and there appears to be some confusion on the alignment of reflecting and reporting on the quality agenda, and reporting for operational and business planning. We need to ensure that there is clarity about the expectations of the content of annual quality reviews and reports, and how School-level quality reviews feed in to operational plans. It is important to ensure that annual quality reviews are meaningful processes, and at the same time provide evidence of critical reflection and action. Whilst it is recognised that the four Colleges each operate in different ways with different management structures, it is important that there is common approach to the principles of quality enhancement. Our institutional approach needs to be refreshed and developed to ensure robust support of the new University vision and strategy, the new Learning and Teaching Strategy and the evolution of our College and School structures over the past six years.

The review group will reconvene during this academic session to consider any outstanding reports and discuss future reporting arrangements.

Actions

David Coates will follow-up with the CASS College Secretary on the development of a common workload model across the College.

David Coates will have discussions with Deans on the development of School enhancement-led annual reports that will feed into operational plans.

David Coates will ask the Dean of the School of Psychology if he would permit their annual School commentary to be shared with other Schools as an exemplar.

David Coates and Lesley McLellan will consider options for development of annual monitoring processes to ensure alignment with (and support of) strategy, operational planning and quality enhancement.

Specific Issues for the Attention of the Learning and Teaching Quality Forum and the Learning & Teaching Committee

School of Business

- equipment – responsibility for the provision of equipment in teaching rooms needs to be clarified e.g. interactive whiteboards, visualizers, availability of overhead projectors
- cleanliness of teaching accommodation is sometimes poor, and there is lack of clarity on how substandard teaching accommodation should be reported and how concerns are being addressed
- the reported capacity of teaching accommodation is not always accurate
• timetabling continues to give cause for concern.

School of Humanities
• work-load models/staffing resource issues.

School of Nursing
• the impact of the voluntary severance scheme on staff resources
• work-load models.

School of Dentistry
• staff resource and IT infrastructure

College of Life Sciences
• the importance of tailored reports from the Registry Cognos system.
## APPENDIX 1

### Monitoring Reports Received

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>School</th>
<th>Received Report</th>
<th>College</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Business</td>
<td>24.8.12</td>
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